



Come work at AG! Find out how on page 20.

American Girl™

January/February 2018

HOORAY!
It's Our 25th

BIRTHDAY!

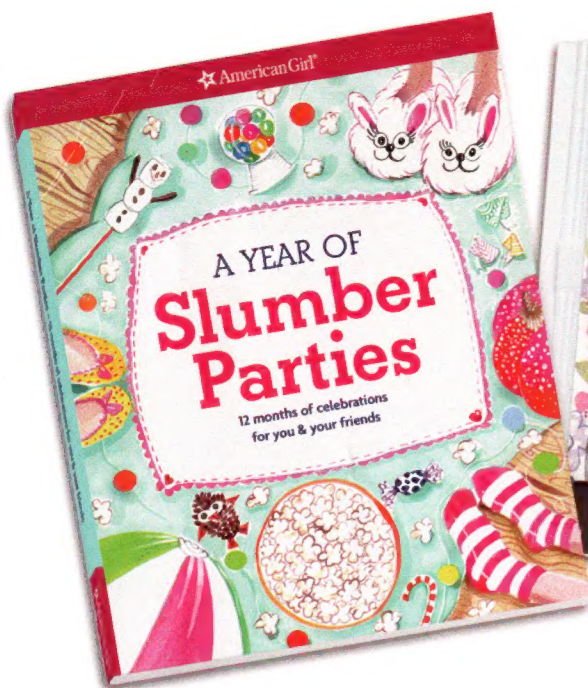
GIRL POWER
Meet 4 Super Girls

Fun!
Brand-New
Quizzes

FILL YOUR YEAR WITH **FUN**



Make 2018 the **BEST YEAR YET**—with a dreamy sleepover party plan for every month! *A Year of Slumber Parties* is filled with ideas for invitations, crafts, party favors, games, recipes, and more.



Like what you see? Find more books like this at the American Girl store nearest you, online at americangirl.com, or your local bookseller.

Must be at least 18 years of age to purchase online or by phone.

Recommended for ages 8 and up.



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Follow Your Inner Star™

Volume 26, Number 1

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**YOU CAN BE AN
AG EDITOR!**



This is
our first
cover!



In 1993, we published our first issue of American Girl magazine! To celebrate our 25th birthday, we filled this issue with lots of '90s fun!

**New
department!**



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Plus
Totally '90s stickers!



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dreamed of
a birthday
party in
Hawaii as a
kid!

Loved
'90s hair
scrunchies!

makes
cheese
fondue
on new
year's eve!

stays up late
with her fam-
ily on new
year's eve
each year!

Loved
'90s TV
sitcoms!

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A. Total number of copies (Net press run)	387,452	370,206
B. Paid circulation		
1. Paid requested circ. mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541	267,668	243,754
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales, and other non-USPS paid distribution	20,211	19,020
4. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
C. Total paid distribution	287,879	262,774
D. Free distribution		
1. Outside-county stated on Form 3541	197	132
2. In-county stated on Form 3541	751	751
3. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
4. Free distribution outside mail	5,977	3,993
E. Total free distribution	6,925	4,876
F. Total distribution	294,804	267,650
G. Copies not distributed	92,649	10,256
H. Total	387,453	370,206
I. Percent paid	97.65%	98.18%

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American Girl

Printed in the USA on paper containing at least 10% post-consumer waste.
Recycle me or pass me on to a friend.

THE
BUZZ



LET'S CELEBRATE!

American Girl magazine is 25 years old! To celebrate such a big milestone, we're launching a brand-new contest on page 30. If you and your friend win, you'll come to work with the magazine staff for a day, and you'll get to share your ideas for an upcoming issue of American Girl magazine. You'll also get to see all the behind-the-scenes secrets of how an issue is made.

In the last 25 years, we've received more than ONE MILLION letters, drawings, stories, poems, and photos from YOU, our biggest fans. Thank you for being such good friends, and here's to 25 more wonderful years!

Barbara
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Write to Us!



BE SURE TO INCLUDE

- * First and last name
- * Address and phone number
- * Birth date, including year
- * School photo or other portrait
- * Parent's signature

SNAIL MAIL

Send us a cool envelope!
Print our address neatly on the
front and your return address
and the section of the magazine
you're writing to on the back.



OR CONNECT WITH US ONLINE
AMERICANGIRL.COM/PLAYMAGAZINE



we can't print every letter, but we
read everything you send to us.
hope to hear from you soon!



ENVELOPE ART BY
Karla R.
Age 11, Illinois



Safety first!

Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help.
When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

Girls EXPRESS

FOR & BY GIRLS!

STRIKE A POSE!

Create a photo booth
backdrop in minutes.

Ask an adult
for permission
before hanging
your backdrop.

Tape colorful paper
plates (available at your
local craft or party supply
store) 2 inches apart on a
wall. Pose in front of your
bold DIY backdrop! To
learn how to make these
props, turn to page 5!

AG POLL



Answer these questions to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What's your go-to hairstyle?

36% Pony tail

35% Long & loose

16% Beautiful braids

13% Short & sweet



How would you spend a weekend afternoon?

45% Watch a movie with friends

27% Play outside

15% Play board games with your family

13% Attend a concert or play



What dinner night tradition would you most like to have?

46% Sundae Sundays

26% Taco Tuesdays

19% French Fry Fridays

9% meatball Mondays



Capri E. loves to sing. She also loves to help others. When she learned about orphans living in poverty around the world, she and her family came up with a way to help. She researched a charity that helps children without families, and then she used her voice to raise money and spread awareness about children in need. She visited and sang in 80 different countries around the world.

In each place (from Thailand to Turkey and the Netherlands to New Zealand), Capri learned and performed the country's national anthem. She sang in 41 foreign languages! "I had to make sure to learn the correct pronunciation of each national anthem," she says. She also juggled homework because she was home-

schooled during the nine-month trip. Along the way, she met some of the children she was trying to help. She met girls in Cambodia who were not allowed to attend school and a girl in a South African orphanage whose big dream was to know her own family.

"Meeting them made me realize how much I take for granted in my life," Capri says. "The whole trip gave me a better view on my life and the world."



You can Shine, too!

Do you have a creative talent or hobby you enjoy? Donate your time to an organization you love and want to support.

Pretty Props

Create cute props for your photo booth background.

Chalk It Up!

Cut a word bubble shape out of chalkboard paper. Use chalk to add a fun phrase, and tape it to a craft stick.

Mustache

Draw a mustache design on a piece of sparkly paper. Cut out the mustache and tape it to a craft stick.

Emoji Eyes

Use a large heart-shaped hole punch to create two hearts. Tape the edges of the hearts together, and add a craft stick with tape.

Arrow

Cut a large arrow out of craft paper. Use adhesive sparkly letters to spell out BFF.

Flower Crown

Tie fake flowers and fake leaves (found at your local craft store) around a plastic headband. If needed, use craft glue to secure and let dry overnight.



Meet a Reader's Pet

Anna loves her miniature foal!

What's your pet's name?

His name is Stormy.
His nickname is Bubbles.

How did you name your pet?

He was born at night during a big rainstorm.

Describe a time Stormy made you laugh:

A bug flew up his nose while I was brushing him. He kept snorting over and over to get it out!

Describe a time your pet was naughty.

He chased my dog to the fence

when I wasn't looking!

How would you describe your pet in three words?

mischievous. Independent. Naughty.

How do you show your pet that you love him?

I scratch him behind his ears, feed him treats, and give him butterfly kisses (by rubbing our noses together).

Anna C.
Age 11, Alabama



This is a picture of me hugging Stormy.



To find out how your pet can be featured, go to

americangirl.com/playmagazine

TRUE STORY

Darci performed her ventriloquist act on a big-time TV talent show!

Dear American Girl,

Have you ever heard of ventriloquism? It's an illusion created when a person talks or sings without moving her lips and "throws" her voice to a puppet. The first time I saw it, I was super fascinated. I practiced in the mirror at home and tried to sing the ABCs without moving my lips.

It was hard. Especially letters like m and w. But I got better. Soon I could do tongue twisters and sing whole songs. When I was 10, I got my first puppet. Katie is a cowgirl who yodels. We entered a local talent show together. I was pretty nervous but also pretty excited. I practice every

day. I have other puppets, too, like Petunia. She's a white bunny and, like me, a little shy. But when she's onstage she loves to sing. I also have a duck puppet, Okie, who impersonates Elvis. Then there's Edna Doorknocker. She's a granny puppet who sings hip-hop songs.

My puppets and I have performed in lots of big talent shows and charity fund-raisers. We even won a national TV talent show. Our prize was \$1 million! I love ventriloquism because it's so fun. And it makes people feel good. I guess you could say that's my purpose in life.

Darci F.
Age 13, Oklahoma

This is a picture of me and Petunia on TV last year.



AGART GALLERY

Our readers love to hand-letter!



Catherine C.
Age 12, Ohio



Kathleen D.
Age 14, Maine



Madeline D.
Age 11, Oregon



Madeline W.
Age 13, Georgia




HELP US FILL OUR GALLERY!

Send color copies of original artwork or photos to the address on page 2. Sorry, we can't return entries.

MINI Quiz

Which invitation would you send?

- Which Saturday activity would you choose?
 - Going to a fancy spa
 - Doing karaoke with your friends
 - Spending the afternoon at a busy cafe in New York City

- Which key chain would you clip on your bag?
 - 
 - 
 - 

- Which new skill would you like to learn?
 - Videography
 - How to do fancy hair braids
 - How to juggle while walking on stilts

- Which dessert would you gobble up?
 - Cupcake with candy pearls
 - Marshmallow dipped in frosting and covered in sprinkles on a stick
 - Volcano ice cream

- Which word speaks to you?
 - Sparkly
 - Quirky
 - Rowdy

Answers

Mostly a's
VIP MOVIE
PREMIERE PASS



Mostly b's
A SIMPLE INVITATION
WITH A BALLOON
ATTACHED



Mostly c's
SILLY ANIMAL
VIDEO INVITATION
VIA TEXT/E-MAIL



Contest

HAPPY 25th BIRTHDAY, AG MAGAZINE!

Thanks to all the readers who created amazing birthday cards for American Girl magazine!



Sparkling Sweet
Maggie K.
Age 10, North Carolina



Clever Collage
Indira W.
Age 11, Virginia

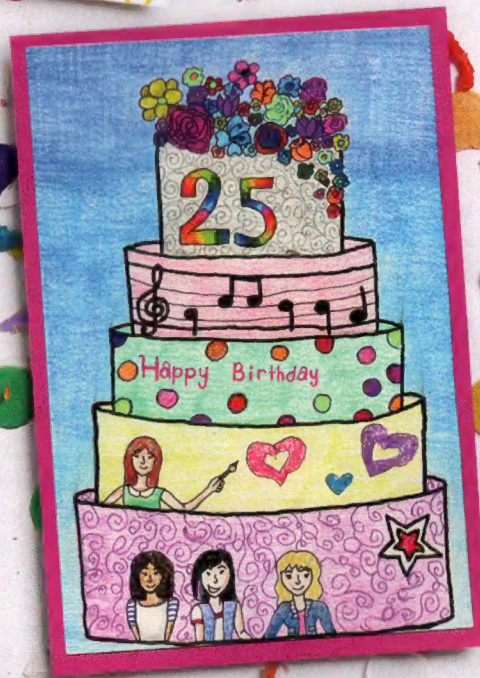


Shine Bright



Greta B.

Age 10, Minnesota



AG Takes the Cake



Maia T.

Age 11, California



Happy Hearts

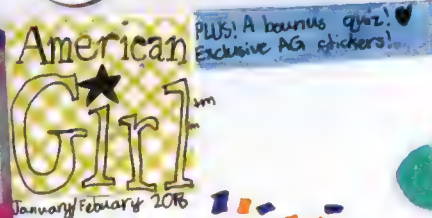


Gianna F.
Age 9, New Jersey

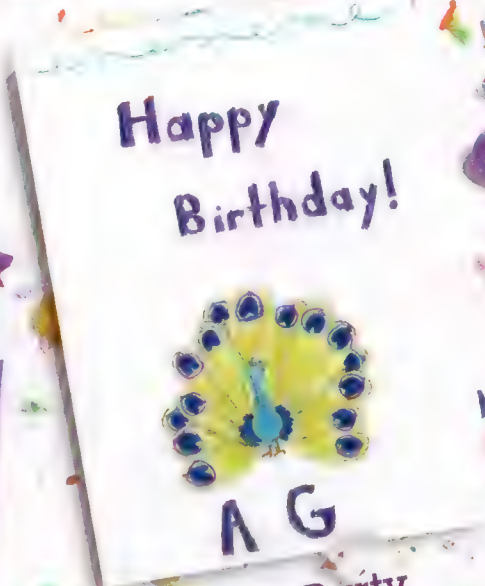
Super Special Issue



Olivia G.
Age 10, Texas



January/February 2016



Peacock Party



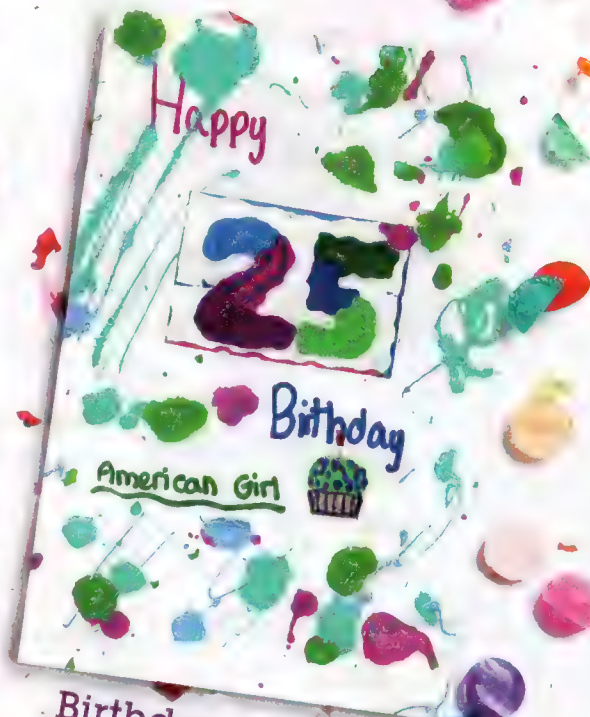
Elise K.
Age 13, Florida



Dainty Delight



Leah L.
Age 12, Ohio



Birthday Splash



Akymi S.
Age 12, New York

Poetry Contest: SING A SONG OF SUMMER

Though the year's just begun
and winter's such fun,
we'll soon trade our snowflakes
for the warm summer sun!

Thank you for making *American Girl* magazine's 25th birthday extra special! To continue the celebration, write a poem about summer to the rhythm of the "Happy Birthday" song (just like the example, above)! Winning entries will appear in the July/August 2018 issue, so cozy up, dream of summer, and let your poetic voice shine!

Send us your poems, using the address on page 2, and be sure to include your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: February 10, 2018. Sorry—we can't return entries. ★

AG Mag Fan Favorites!

Readers like you shared what they enjoy most about *American Girl* magazine.

Five Favorite Features

1. According to Aggie
2. Quizzes
3. Crafts and recipes
4. Fiction
5. Contest

Five Favorite Themes 6

1. All-craft
2. All-animal
3. All-cooking
4. All-adventure
5. All-history

Five Favorite Inserts

1. Color-in poster
2. Stickers
3. Mini posters
4. Garland
5. Mini calendar

◆ Five Favorite Requests for More!

1. Quizzes
2. Crafts
3. Recipes
4. True stories
5. Girl-made art

What are your favorite kinds of posters?

Take a peek at pages 43 and 44 to find out!



How would you describe *American Girl* magazine?



Coming Up: ICE CREAM

Every time I go to our library, I see if there's a new magazine. When there is, I get really excited!



Macia L.
Age 11, Georgia

I would love to see more about girls who like STEM.



Emily G.
Age 10, Pennsylvania

I would love to see more creative writing done by readers!



Lucy H.
Age 12, Wisconsin



I'd love free stickers in every magazine!



Alicia Jr.
Age 13, Ohio

I love reading cool stories about real girls doing great things.



Chloe C.
Age 12, California

I'd like to have the magazine come more often—like every month!



Bora B.
Age 11, Pennsylvania



1. Which creamy, frozen treat do you like best?

- a. Ice cream
- b. Frozen yogurt
- c. Frozen custard
- d. Gelato
- e. Sherbet

2. Cone OR dish?

3. What is the best season for eating ice cream?

- a. Spring
- b. Summer
- c. Fall
- d. Winter
- e. All of them!

4. Toppings and mix-ins?

Yes, please OR No, thanks!

5. How many scoops?

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. Keep 'em coming!
- e. I'd rather have soft serve.

6. Have you ever made ice cream at home?

Yes OR No

7. Draw a delicious ice cream treat you'd love to eat!

Send your answers to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: February 10, 2018. Some answers will appear in the July/August 2018 issue. ★

According to Aggie™

I am telling you, THIS is the year we stay up till midnight!

Nappy New Year!

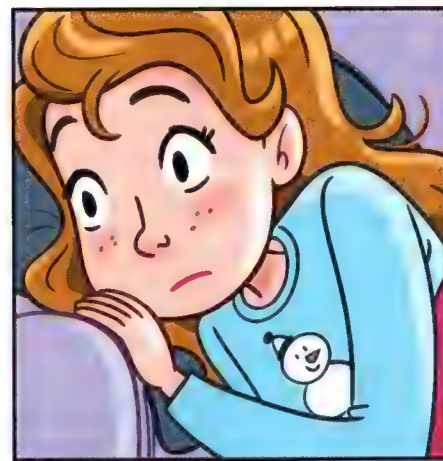
Created by
Mary Richards Beaumont,
Dan Nordskog &
Genevieve Kote

We got the Extra-Zing Cheetah Cola and the Threezies. We GOT this!

I can't wait to see what Pashmina is wearing.

Whatever. When her song starts, that means it's almost New Year's!

Happy New Year!



Don't miss my next
misadventure:
RIGHT MEOW



Super Girls

Meet four change makers who are shooting for the stars.

Real Reporting

Hilde L., age 11

When I was younger, I loved to go to work with my dad. He was a news reporter in New York City. He'd take me with him to do interviews for stories he was working on. When I was seven, I started writing my own articles about things like when my mom

got a new car. I hand-printed my stories on notecards and sold them for ten cents each. No one bought them, but that didn't discourage me. It just made me more determined to do a real newspaper, so, with help from my dad, I did.

I love collecting facts and reporting my stories.



I didn't get into serious reporting right away. On the front page of my first issue was a story about my little sister's birth.

When I got my first e-mail tip about a crime, it felt like Christmas Day. My dad and I went to the police station, and I asked them for the address where it happened. Of course, they wouldn't give it to me. So I did some research about the break-in until I found someone who knew something. It turns out there was a hero dog that

sister and I heard rumors that a mountain lion might be roaming our neighborhood! We discovered that the animal had died. I sent a photo of the animal to a wildlife expert, who told me it was probably a coyote. I wrote a story about it, of course. I guess I'm naturally very curious. I never know where I'll be reporting next.

Because of my reporting, a book publisher asked me to write a series of mystery books. It's kind of strange, even for me. I didn't want to publish just any book. I wanted it to mean

"I've learned that if I take myself seriously, then other people will, too."

scared away the intruder! I asked a lot of questions, got as many facts as I could, and reported my story. I've learned that if I take myself seriously, then other people will, too.

Once when I was ten, my older

something. So I wrote a series that shows how powerful kids can be. I want my books to inspire kids around the world and encourage them to follow their dreams like I am doing. Because when I'm reporting, every day is an adventure!

flexin'
in my
complexion



Fashion Forward

Kheris R., age 11

When I was little, my grandma used to tell me I was "flexin' in my complexion" when I smiled. I think it was a way of saying that she was happy I was comfortable in my skin. Once when I was in first grade, my teacher asked all the kids in the class to draw ourselves. She handed me a

My older sister, Taylor, and I make the T-shirts. We do everything at home, from designing the shirts on a computer to screen-printing (it's like putting a decal on with a steamy iron) and shipping. My favorite T-shirt is white with big, gold letters. I love the sparkles and how it's so bold. When I wear that

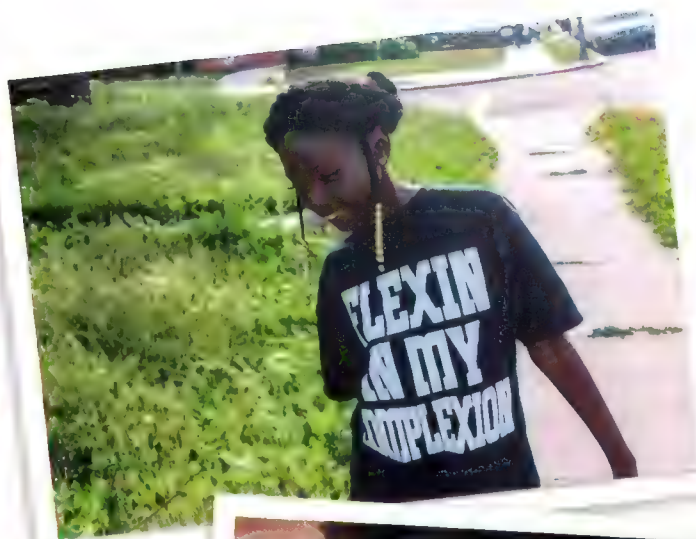
"We are all unique and beautiful and smart in different ways."

black crayon, but I asked her if I could have brown instead. The kids laughed and teased me. After that, I got bullied about my dark complexion.

I've never forgotten how that felt. Bullying really brings people down. I started an awareness campaign to help make sure others don't get bullied. I use the slogan "Flexin' in My Complexion" on T-shirts to remind people not to tease others about their skin color. We are all unique and beautiful and smart in different ways.

shirt, I feel confident and powerful. It also reminds me that it doesn't matter what other people say.

I love it when others wear the shirts. That's what helps me power through the hard parts, like figuring out how to make the designs work. I still can't believe we started our own clothing line. When I ship an order off at the post office, I feel so happy. I hope the person who gets it feels happy. Most of all, I hope people feel comfortable in their skin, no matter what color it is.



Here I am
posing in one of
my shirts!

Space Sisters

Rebecca Y., age 13
kimberly Y., age 10

We built our own spacecraft, and the last one we made went to the edge of the earth's atmosphere!

We launch weather balloons and send them into space. Weather balloons are giant balloons (or spacecraft) that float into the air and track weather. Before we launch our spacecraft, we do a countdown. After three, two, one, we let it go and look up. It's fun to watch it go, especially after all the work it takes just to get it launched. Kimberly always does a liftoff dance.

We started this spacecraft project as a family two years ago, with our mom and dad. Making the spacecraft was the biggest part. We brainstormed ideas together, designed it, bought the materials, and then built it ourselves. So far, we've done three launches.

Ready to launch
our weather
balloon!



It's fun to learn. But building and launching a spacecraft is a lot of responsibility. We have to do everything by a certain time, plan it, and test everything. We can't expect someone else to fix problems that come up. We have to fix them ourselves.

One of the craziest things that happened since we built our launcher was being invited to the 2016 White House Science Fair to present our project to President Obama! We got the call the day before April Fool's Day, so we thought it was a joke. We were so excited when we realized it wasn't. When we

got to the State Dining Room, a lot of people wanted to take selfies with us. Then a ton of cameras were set up. Reporters started interviewing us, and

But when he spoke with us, we weren't nervous anymore. He was really nice. We shook his hand, and he asked a lot of questions about how the

"A project like this is **NOT** about how old you are, it's about how much **HARD WORK** you put into it."

then President Obama walked in. We were so nervous as we waited our turn to talk to him.

spacecraft worked. We could hear cameras going off all over the room.



Kimberly is attaching a foam ball to the launcher to help it float in case of a water landing.

We love working together because we can depend on each other.



Here we are with President Obama at the 2016 White House Science Fair!

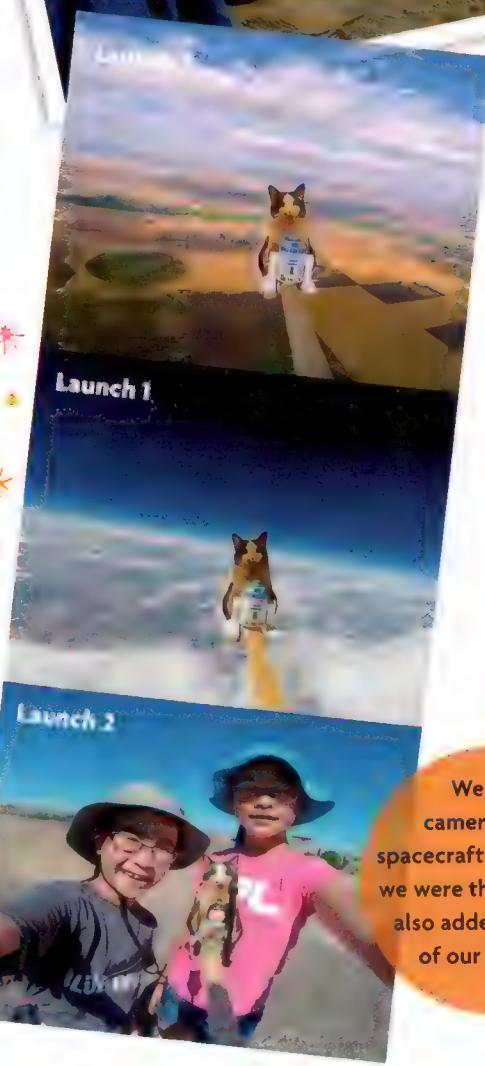
Our Launches

Sometimes people have doubted that we—two girls—had the power to do all this on our own. But a project like this is not about how old you are; it's about how much hard work you put into it. And about how you solve problems along the way instead of giving up. This is what we want to tell girls about getting involved in science: It's something we can all get into. And it's fun! When that weather balloon launches, we get something like a proud feeling (Rebecca says it's a bubbly sensation, like happiness bursting out) and a satisfied feeling, especially if we can inspire and empower others to love science like we do.

Launch 1 We didn't know what to expect! We let the weather balloon go and hoped for the best. We used binoculars to watch it drift away. It went behind a cloud; then we couldn't see it anymore. That was stressful because we were hoping it was OK. But that day, it traveled 51 miles!

Launch 2 We used a bigger balloon this time. It went higher and faster. This balloon traveled 72 miles!

We put little bits of bacteria on our spacecraft and launched it. NASA is going to analyze the bacteria data, which is very cool. We were so excited when we found out NASA was going to look at our data!



We put a camera on our spacecraft so it felt like we were there, too. We also added a picture of our cat, Loki!

YAY, AG!

Are you an American Girl magazine superfan?
Take this quiz and test your knowledge.

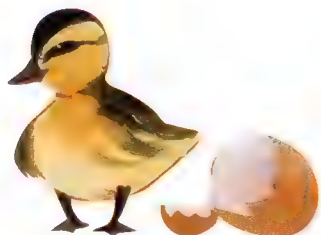
1. Which animal has never appeared on an American Girl magazine cover?

a. Duckling

b. Puppy

c. Kitten

d. Chick



2. American Girl magazine has had a girl wearing a horseback-riding helmet on its cover—true or false?



3. How many times has the magazine shown real-life best friends on its cover?

a. One

b. Two

c. Three

d. Four



4. The most common name among American Girl magazine readers is:

a. Emily

b. Hannah

c. Emma

d. Olivia

5. The state with the most American Girl magazine subscribers is:

a.



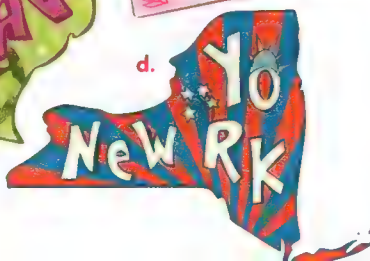
b.



c.



d.



6. Which item has never appeared on the cover of American Girl magazine?

a. Wrapping paper rolls

b. A bowling ball

c. A superhero cape

d. Binoculars



7. American Girl magazine has had 166 issues in total—true or false?



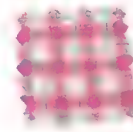
8. The Contest department received the most entries for which topic in 2017?



a. Butterflies



b. Flowers



c. Fabric



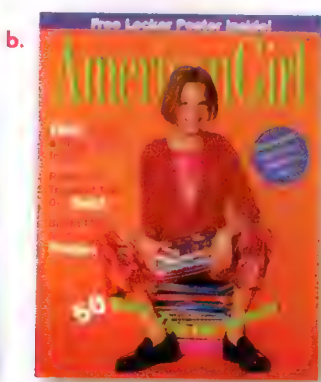
d. Pumpkins

9. Which animal has never been featured in the "Meet a Reader's Pet" section of Girls Express?

- a. Bernese mountain dog
- b. Twin foals
- c. Salamander
- d. Sheep



10. Which magazine cover was from 1993?



Take a guess!

How many puppies were at a recent cover photo shoot?

- a. Three
- b. Six
- c. Nine
- d. Twelve



Sneak peak!
Coming this summer!



10. This cover is from December 1993.
1. True—there have been 166 issues in total, including this issue.
2. b. Only one puppy more than 100 former subscribers from readers.
3. d. The magazine hasn't featured a puppy in the "Meet a Reader's Pet" section of Girls Express.
4. a. This puppy is a puppy.
5. d. This puppy is a puppy.



Answers
1. d. There has never been a puppy in the cover of American Girl magazine.
2. That the May/June 1993 issue featured a girl wearing a yellow shirt.
3. c. We've had twelve different puppies in the "Meet a Reader's Pet" section of Girls Express.
4. c. Express.
5. d. This puppy is a puppy.

BE AN AG EDITOR FOR A DAY!

TEAM OF TWO

For 25 years, *American Girl* magazine has been telling stories of real girls getting together to accomplish amazing things.

Sisters who raise and train Siberian Huskies for dogsledding races

Best friends who helped people who lost their homes after an earthquake

Two friends who put on dance shows to benefit kids with cancer

Twins who create healthy, yummy recipes for their blog

Have you and a friend done something special as a team of two? Something you're really proud of? Something that made a difference and maybe even changed lives? What's your partnership story?

Tell your story for a chance to be editors-in-chief for a day at *American Girl* magazine. You'll join our staff here at our headquarters in Wisconsin and do everything editors do to get your story ready to print. Follow the instructions on the entry form, have one parent of each of you sign it, and mail in the entry before February 28, 2018.

All of us here at *American Girl* can't wait to be inspired by what you've accomplished together—and to welcome you to our magazine team!

2018 Magazine Editor Contest Official Rules

NO PURCHASE OR PAYMENT OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN THIS CONTEST. MANY WILL ENTER, FEW WILL WIN. A PURCHASE WILL NOT INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING. ENTRY OPEN ONLY TO GIRLS AGES 8-13 WHO ARE LEGAL RESIDENTS OF THE 50 UNITED STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. VOID IN PUERTO RICO, ALL U.S. TERRITORIES AND POSSESSIONS, AND WHEREVER PROHIBITED BY LAW.

1. **SPONSOR:** The "2018 Magazine Editor Contest" ("Contest") is sponsored by American Girl Brands, LLC, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562 ("Sponsor").

2. **ELIGIBILITY:** The Contest is open to girls between the ages of eight (8) and thirteen (13) (born between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2010) ("Entrant") with written permission from their parent or legal guardian. Parent/legal guardian and Entrant must both be legal residents of the 50 United States or the District of Columbia (excluding Puerto Rico and U.S. territories and possessions). Void where prohibited by law. Employees and agents of American Girl Brands, LLC and its parent company, affiliates, and/or subsidiaries (collectively, the "Promotion Entities") are ineligible to participate.

3. **CONTEST PERIOD:** The Contest starts January 1, 2018 and ends February 28, 2018 (the "Contest Period"). All entries must be postmarked no later than February 28, 2018 and received by March 7, 2018 to be eligible for review. Limit one (1) entry per person for the entire Contest Period.

4. **HOW TO ENTER:** No purchase, entry fee, payment, or proof of purchase necessary to participate. During the contest period, you may obtain an entry form in the January/February 2018 issue of American Girl magazine or at www.americangirlmagazine.com, where official entry forms will be available beginning January 1, 2018 at 12:00 a.m. CST through February 28, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. CST. All entries must be submitted via mail; there are no online entry opportunities in this Contest. You may also obtain an entry form by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: 2018 Magazine Editor Contest, ENTRY FORM REQUEST, PO Box 620497, Middleton WI 53562-0497 to receive an official entry form. Vermont residents may omit return postage. Requests for entry forms must be received by no later than February 14, 2018. The official entry form must be completed and submitted by Entrant's parent/legal guardian with a signature plus the signatures of the Entrant's best girl friend and her parent/legal guardian. Send completed entry, essay, and photos to: 2018 Magazine Editor Contest, American Girl Magazine, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, late, illegible, incomplete, mutilated, misdirected, or postage-due mail/entries/requests. Each entry must be mailed in a separate outer mailing envelope. Entries, including photographs will not be returned.

Entries **will not** be accepted unless all four (4) parties have signed the entry form acknowledging that they accept and agree to be bound by all Contest rules. In addition to the entry form, please submit a photo (no larger than 5" x 7") of each girl (2) or a photo of the two (2) best friends together and an essay **not to exceed 500 words** written by Entrant **describing how Entrant and her best girl friend made a difference or accomplished something great together**. Please print the name of each girl on the back of the photo(s). Entrant and her best girl friend, who also must be 8-13 years of age (born between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2010), do not have to reside in the same city or state, but residence for both and for their parents/legal guardians must be within the 50 United States and/or District of Columbia. Essays must be submitted in English. Submission of the winning entry only grants Sponsor and its agents the right to publish, use, adapt, edit and/or modify such entry in any way, in any and all media, without limitation and without consideration to Entrant. Submission of any entry further constitutes Entrant's consent to irrevocably assign and transfer to Sponsor any and all rights, title, and interest in the entry, including, without limitation, all copyrights. Entries must be the original work of Entrant, may not have been previously published, may not have won previous awards, must not infringe third-party rights, and must be suitable for publication.

5. **WINNER NOTIFICATION:** The Contest consists of three (3) phases. Phase 1: The American Girl Judging Panel ("Judging Panel") screen all entries for compliance with the rules and adherence to the judging criteria. Phase 2: The ten (10) top essays will be evaluated by the Judging Panel in accordance with the judging criteria and sent for final review. Phase 3: One (1) Winner will be selected from the top ten (10) entries selected in Phase 2 and notified by American Girl via email or phone number provided on the entry form. Winner will be selected by the judges on the basis of the essay's uniqueness and appeal. In the event of a tie, tied entries will be re-judged just based on appeal. Criteria will be weighted equally. Winner will be selected on or about April 26, 2018, by the Judging Panel whose decisions are final and binding on all matters relating to this Contest. Potential winner is subject to eligibility verification and compliance with these Official Rules and will be required to execute an affidavit of eligibility, a liability/publicity release, and other documents ("Prize Claim Documents") as may be required or permitted by law. Potential winner must return all Prize Claim Documents to administrator within fourteen (14) days of materials sent. If any potential winner or guest of winner fails or refuses to sign and return all Prize Claim Documents within fourteen (14) days of prize notifications sent, the winner may be disqualified and an alternate winner may be selected and notified, time permitting, before scheduled June 2018 travel, and/or guest(s) may forfeit their portion of the prize. Model's parents or legal guardians must agree to terms of Model employment and sign Model's employment agreements/releases as a condition of acceptance and prior to travel. Sponsor is not responsible for any change in address of Entrants and/or guests of potential winners.

6. **PRIZE:** Winner and her best girl friend will spend a day at the American Girl corporate offices in Middleton, Wisconsin to work with staff on the November/December 2018 American Girl magazine issue, the winning essay will appear in the November/December 2018 issue of American Girl magazine along with a photograph taken by American Girl of winner and her best girl friend identified in entry ("Models"). Models and their respective parent/legal guardians (one (1) per each girl) will be flown round-trip coach airfare from a major North American international airport located in the 50 U.S./D.C., close to the Winners' homes and designated by Sponsor, to Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, Wisconsin; will be accommodated in a hotel designated by Sponsor for 3 days/2 nights (two double-occupancy standard hotel rooms, each with two standard/double beds); and will receive one (1) American Girl welcome bag for each girl, meals, and ground transportation (selected by Sponsor). Each Model will receive a cash honorarium in the form of a Visa gift card for her services and all rights therein in the amount of \$250.00 (Total Approximate Retail Value: \$5,000). Any changes in travel once flights or other arrangements are reserved will be the financial responsibility of the changing party (winner and best girl friend plus parent/legal guardians of each). Both Models and their respective parent/legal guardians must be available for travel to Madison, Wisconsin for the photo shoot during the month of June 2018, specific dates to be determined. Exact travel dates and arrangements subject to availability. If winner, her best girl friend, and a parent/legal guardian for each are not available, an alternate winner and best girl friend will be selected, time permitting, before June 2018 travel. If Models reside within 250 miles or less of the Madison, Wisconsin hotel location, Sponsor, in its sole discretion, may substitute ground transportation in lieu of air transportation in the form of a gas allowance, hired car, or train tickets to the hotel location. Actual value of trip may vary based on point of departure and airfare fluctuations. Any difference between stated approximate retail value and actual value of prize will not be awarded. All prize details not specified in the Official Rules will be determined in Sponsor's sole and absolute discretion. Certain restrictions and blackout dates may apply. Selection of airline and hotel are solely within Sponsor's discretion. Models must be accompanied at all times during trip (including, but not limited to, in-flight, hotel stay, and all prize-related events) by Model's parent or legal guardian. By agreeing to appear as a Model, both Models and the parent or legal guardian of each consent to the use of names, photos, and/or likenesses for advertising and trade purposes in connection with American Girl magazine, in any and all media now known or hereinafter invented without territorial or time limitations and without additional compensation, except where prohibited.

All expenses not specifically mentioned above are not included and are solely the responsibility of the respective parent/legal guardian of the Models, including, but not limited to: round-trip transportation between the residence and the departure airport, alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, food, gratuities and tips before arriving in Madison, Wisconsin, incidental and personal expenses, insurance, laundry service, luggage fees, merchandise, mini-bar, service charges, souvenirs, telephone calls, and all other expenses incidental to Model's employment and travel to/from and stay in Wisconsin. Prizes are non transferable and no prize substitutions or cash redemptions allowed, except at the sole discretion of Sponsor. Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to not use the photography on the cover of American Girl magazine. By accepting

OUR TEAM OF TWO

Attach a picture of the two of you here.

Our partnership, in one sentence:

Write a true story telling us about your friendship and what you've accomplished together in 500 or fewer words.

Both partners should fill out the form on the other side of this page. Then cut it out, attach your story, and send it to:

2018 Magazine Editor Contest
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Postmark deadline: **February 28, 2018**

Cut along dotted line.

FRIEND 1

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone number: _____

Birth date: _____

My favorite part of American Girl magazine is: _____

Yes, this is a true story of our partnership.

Your signature: _____

Yes, my daughter has my permission to enter this contest.

Parent signature: _____

Parent e-mail: _____

FRIEND 2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone number: _____

Birth date: _____

My favorite part of American Girl magazine is: _____

Yes, this is a true story of our partnership.

Your signature: _____

Yes, my daughter has my permission to enter this contest.

Parent signature: _____

Parent e-mail: _____

employment as a Model, the winner acknowledges compliance with these Official Rules.

Winner and her best girl friend plus parent/legal guardian must travel on the same itinerary. If Winner's best girl friend resides in a different state, they can fly on a separate itinerary but must fly with their respective parent/legal guardian. All individuals traveling must have all necessary identification and/or travel documents. Once travel companions are selected, they may not be substituted, except in Sponsor's sole and absolute discretion. Airline tickets are not refundable or transferable and are not valid for upgrades or frequent flyer miles.

Sponsor shall not be responsible for any cancellations, delays, diversions or substitution or any act or omissions whatsoever by the air carriers, hotels, venue operators, transportation companies, prize providers or any other persons providing any prize-related services or accommodations. Additional prize award details and travel information to be provided to the Winner at the time of notification. Winner and guests are also responsible for obtaining travel insurance (and all other forms of insurance) at their option and hereby acknowledge that Sponsor has not and will not obtain or provide travel insurance or any other form of insurance. Lost, stolen or damaged airline tickets, travel vouchers or certificates will not be replaced or exchanged.

7. CONDUCT: By entering, Entrants agree that all issues and questions concerning the construction, validity, interpretation, and enforceability of these Official Rules, Entrant's rights and obligations, or the rights and obligations of the Sponsor in connection with the Contest shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of Wisconsin without giving effect to any choice of law or conflict of law rules, and Entrants consent to the jurisdiction and venue of the federal, state, and local courts located in Dane County, Wisconsin. Failure to comply with these Official Rules may result in disqualification. Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any individual: (a) acting in any manner deemed by Sponsor to be in violation of these Official Rules; or (b) acting in any manner deemed by Sponsor to be unsportsmanlike, disruptive, and/or with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass any other person. CAUTION: ANY ATTEMPT BY AN ENTRANT OR ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE CONTEST IS IN VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND SHOULD SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, SPONSOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEEK DAMAGES AND COSTS (INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION, ATTORNEYS' FEES) FROM ANY SUCH PERSON TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.

8. TAXES: The parent/legal guardian of winners will be solely responsible for all federal, state and/or local taxes, and for any other fees or costs associated with the prizes they receive, regardless of whether it, in whole or in part, are used. The parent/legal guardian of winners may be required to provide Sponsor with a valid social security number or tax identification number before the prize will be awarded for tax reporting purposes. The parent/legal guardian of winners may be issued an IRS 1099 form for prizes over \$600.

9. RELEASE: As a condition of entering, Entrants' parents or legal guardians agree (and agree to confirm in writing): (a) to release the Promotion Entities and each of their officers, directors, employees and agents from any and all liability, loss or damage incurred with respect to the awarding, receipt, possession, and/or use or misuse of any prize, including any traveling related thereto; (b) under no circumstances will Entrant be permitted to obtain awards for, and participant hereby waives all rights to claim, punitive, incidental, consequential, or any other damages, other than for actual out-of-pocket expenses; (c) all causes of action arising out of or connected with this sweepstakes, or any prize awarded, shall be resolved individually, without resort to any form of class action; and (d) any and all claims, judgments, and award shall be limited to actual out-of-pocket costs incurred, excluding attorneys' fees and court costs.

10. GENERAL: Contest is governed by the laws of the State of Wisconsin, with venue in Dane County, Wisconsin, and all claims must be resolved in the local, state, or federal courts of Dane County, Wisconsin. By entering this Contest, participants agree to abide by and be bound by these Official Contest Rules and the decisions of the judges, which are final in all matters related to the Contest. Promotion Entities also reserve the right, at their sole discretion, to disqualify any individual it finds to be tampering with the entry process or the operation of the Contest. This Contest is subject to all applicable federal, state, and local laws. By participating in the Contest, participants agree to be bound by these Official Rules and the decisions of the judging organization and waive any right to claim ambiguity in the Contest or these Official Rules. Winner and participants also agree to release, discharge, indemnify, and hold harmless the Promotion Entities, and the officers, employees and agents of each, from and against any claims, damages or liability due to any injuries, damages or losses to any person (including death) or property of any kind resulting in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from acceptance, possession, misuse, use, loss, or misdirection of any prize, or participation in any Contest-related activity or participation in this Contest, or any other error in the offering or announcement of any prize and hereby waive all rights to claim, punitive, incidental, consequential, or any other damages, other than for actual out-of-pocket expenses; all causes of action arising out of or connected with this promotion, or any prize awarded shall be resolved individually, without resort to any form of class action; and any and all claims, judgments, and award shall be limited to actual out-of-pocket costs incurred, excluding attorneys' fees and court costs. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, late, illegible, incomplete, misdirected, or postage-due mail/requests. If you are selected as the winner, your information may also be included in a publicly available winner's list.

11. WINNER'S LIST: For the name of the winner, send a self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to 2018 Magazine Editor Contest Winner's List, PO Box 620497, Middleton WI 53562-0497. All such requests must be received by April 22, 2018.

No Purchase of any kind is necessary to enter or win this sweepstakes. You have not yet won. Grand Prize: Winner and her best girl friend will spend a day at the American Girl corporate offices in Middleton, Wisconsin to work with staff on the November/December 2018 American Girl magazine issue, the winning essay will appear in the November/December 2018 issue of American Girl magazine along with a photograph taken by American Girl of winner and her best girl friend identified in entry ("Models"). Models and their respective parent/legal guardians (one (1) per each girl) will be flown round-trip coach airfare from a major North American international airport located in the 50 U.S./D.C., close to the Winners homes and designated by Sponsor, to Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, Wisconsin; will be accommodated in a hotel designated by Sponsor for 3 days/2 nights (two double-occupancy standard hotel rooms, each with two standard/double beds), and will receive one (1) American Girl welcome bag for each girl, meals, and ground transportation (selected by Sponsor). Each Model will receive a cash honorarium in the form of a Visa gift card for her services and all rights therein in the amount of \$250.00. (ARV) \$5,000. There is 1 Grand Prize Winner. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. Entries must be received by March 7, 2018. Sponsor is: American Girl Brands, LLC, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562.

TOTALLY '90s PARTY

Go back in time at a party that celebrates the 1990s!

INVITATION

Before texts, girls wrote each other notes! Write the party details on an 8½-by-11-inch sheet of colored paper. Follow these directions to fold it.




1. Fold up the bottom left corner to the right edge.

2. Fold the left edge to meet the right.

3. Turn over the folded paper. Then fold the paper from the top down into thirds.

4. Fold up the flap and tuck it into the "pocket" of the note. Write "To" and "From" on the front.

DECADE DECOR

 Set the stage for your party with a 1990s playlist and some bright, bold colors. Here are some decoration ideas:

Color Pop Garland: Create wall-to-wall color with pom-pom garlands. Thread a needle with a long piece of embroidery floss. Anchor the loose end of the thread to a clipboard. String pom-poms onto the thread by carefully pushing the needle into the pom-poms' centers and pulling it through. Fill the string with as many pom-poms as you'd like. Ask an adult to help you hang the garlands.

Table: Use bold colors and mismatched patterns for your table decorations. Try stripes with dots or two different prints. Choose patterns that share similar colors.

RETRO HAIR SALON

Complete your throwback look with a rad hairstyle.

Side ponytail: Pull all your hair to one side of your head directly above your ear. Make a tight ponytail using a hair elastic. Finish with a fabric scrunchie.

Hot hair: Forget the hairstyle and wear a retro hat instead!



Bucket Hat

Bodysuit

Plaid

Overalls

Baby-Doll Dress

Layered Socks

Combat Boots

Half side ponytail: Follow the instructions for a side ponytail, but use only the top section of your hair to make the ponytail.

Big bangs: Ask an adult to use a curling iron to curl your bangs under. Use your fingers to tease your curled bangs and finish with hairspray.

Butterfly clip: Section your hair into small rows. Twist each row and fasten the end of the twist to your head using a mini butterfly clip.

FASHION FLASHBACK

Ask guests to dress in their favorite '90s fashions. Find some trends to try on these pages. (Some of these looks have come back in style!)

Colored Suspenders

Track Suit

High-Top Sneakers



MALL MUNCHIES

In the 1990s, indoor malls were more than a place to shop; they were an all-day destination. Serve up snacks inspired by some food-court favorites!



Orange Smoothies

Pour 2 cups milk, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, ½ cup sugar, 1 (6-ounce) can frozen orange juice concentrate, and 1 cup ice cubes into a blender. Ask an adult to blend on high for about a minute. Pour into glasses and serve with straws.

Rad Rainbow Cupcakes



Make mini cupcakes that burst with color!

You Will Need:

- 1 box white cake mix
- white frosting
- food coloring
- candy sprinkles

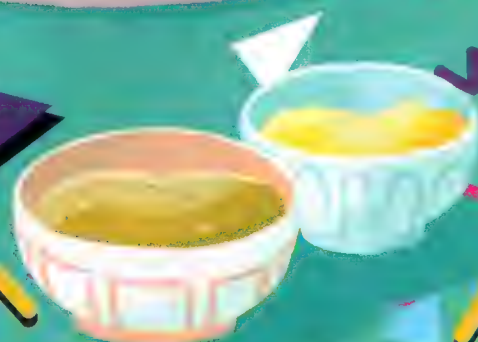
Directions:

1. Ask an adult to help you follow the directions on the cake mix package to make cake batter. Divide the batter into four bowls.
2. Add 10 drops of food coloring to each bowl, using a different color for each one. Stir each bowl until the food coloring is blended in.
3. Place mini cupcake liners in a mini cupcake tin. Starting with one color, use a spoon to scoop a little batter into each cupcake liner. Repeat with each color.
4. Ask an adult to bake the cupcakes in a preheated 350-degree oven for 8–10 minutes. Let cool completely.
5. Once cool, remove the cupcakes from the pan. Put a small dollop of white frosting in the center of each cupcake. Finish with sprinkles.



Jumbo Pretzels

Serve soft pretzels with dipping sauces such as honey mustard, cheese sauce, and ranch dip. (Find soft pretzels in the freezer section at a grocery store.)



PAINT SPLATTER CRAFT

Decorate leggings with a popular '90s pattern. Ask each guest to bring a pair of leggings she can use for a painting craft. Before you begin, cover your work space and have guests cover their clothing. You might want to practice your paint splatter techniques on paper first.



1. Lay the leggings flat, and place a few pieces of cardboard inside so paint doesn't soak through the layers of fabric.

2. Pour nontoxic craft paint onto disposable plates, and mix a little water into the paint so it starts to get runny.

3. Dip a paintbrush into some paint. Holding the brush with one hand, hit the handle of the brush against the fingers on your other hand. Paint will splatter onto the leggings.

4. Keep splattering paint or try dripping paint directly onto the leggings. Let dry. Then paint the other side of the leggings. Let dry completely.



THROWBACK BINGO

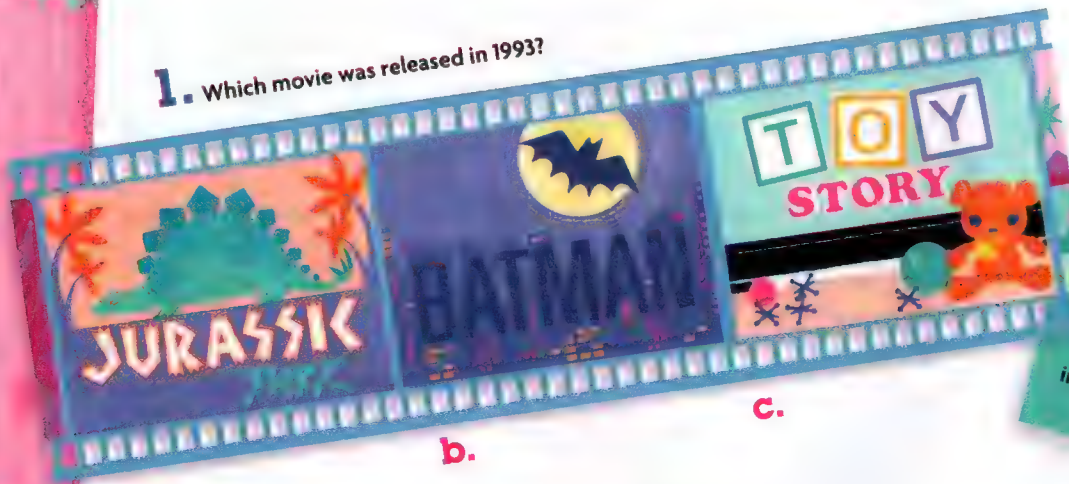
Watch a favorite sitcom or movie from the 1990s and play bingo with a twist. Have each guest create a five-by-five bingo card using the words at the right. (They can be in any arrangement.) Then give each guest candy or coins to mark off each item when they see or hear it in the show. Have prizes for people who get five words in a row. ★



WHAT'S the 4-I-P?

Take this quiz and see how much you know about the 1990s. You go, girl!

1. Which movie was released in 1993?



"What's the 4-I-P?"
This is something someone would have said in the '90s! It meant "What's going on?" or "What's new?" Dialing 4-I-P on your phone meant calling information, so this was a way of asking what new information someone had.

a.

b.

c.

2. Which musical group was formed in the 1990s?



a.



b.



c.

3. Which school supplies might you have had in the 90s?



a.

b.

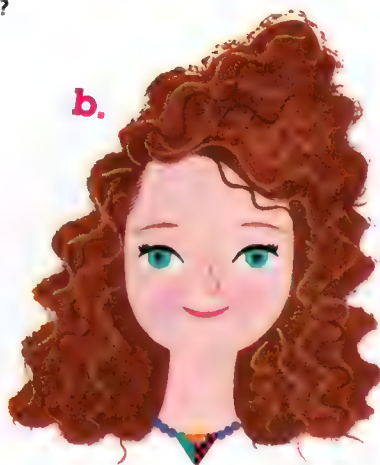
c.

4. Which hairstyle screams "1990s"?

a.



b.



c.

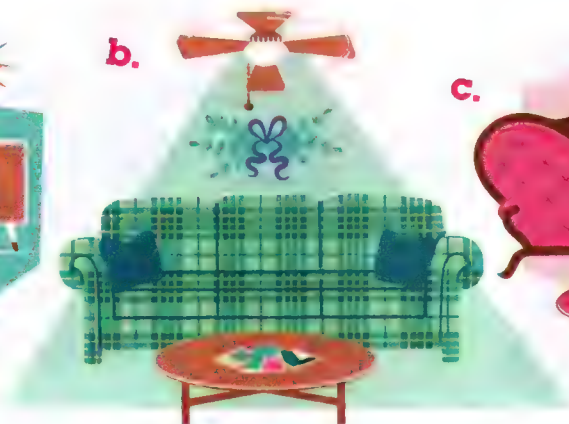


5. What might your living room have looked like in the '90s?

a.



b.



c.



6. Which cell phone is from the '90s?

a.



b.



c.



7. Which accessory was very popular in the '90s?

a.



b.



c.



8. Which horse won the Kentucky Derby in 1993?



9. Which style of clothing might you have seen in the 1990s?



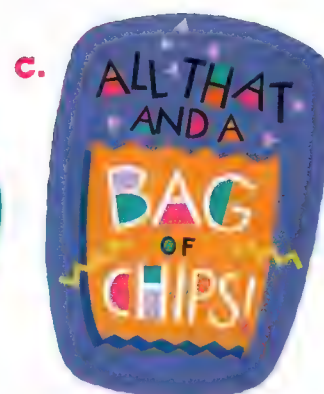
10. Who was elected President of the United States in 1992?



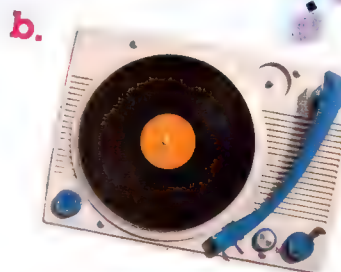
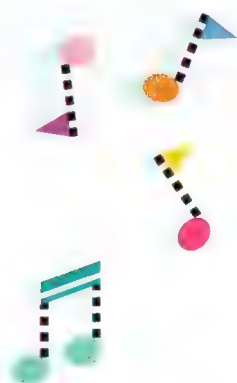
11. Which pattern might you have seen in the 1990s?



12. Which phrase was popular in the 1990s?




13. What would you have used to listen to music in the 1990s?



Answers


- a. *Jurassic Park* debuted in 1993. *Batman* was released in 1989, and *Toy Story* premiered in 1995.
- a. The Spice Girls were formed in the '90s. The Beatles were formed in 1960, and the Jonas Brothers were formed in 2005.
- b. Brightly colored animal illustrations were very popular in the '90s!
- a. Butterfly clips and fun twists or braids were very popular in the '90s. Hairstyle b was from the 1980s, and hairstyle c was from the 1950s.
- b. People were mad for plaid in the '90s! Living room a is an example of common furniture from the 1950s, and living room c would have been seen in the 1920s.
- b. Big, chunky phones were popular in the '90s! Cell phone a is from the '80s, and flip phones (c) were seen in the 2000s.
- b. Butterfly clips were a big deal in the '90s. The floral brooch (c) was popular in the 1950s, big sunglasses (a) were iconic in the 1970s.
- c. Sea Hero won the Kentucky Derby in 1993! Thunder Gulch (a) won in 1995, and Real Quiet (b) won in 1998.
- b. Bright colors, fanny packs, and chunky cell phones were very popular in the 1990s.
- b. Bill Clinton was elected in 1992. Barack Obama (a) served from 2009 to 2017, and Ronald Reagan (c) served as president from 1981 to 1989.
- a. This graphic, bright pattern is totally '90s. You might have come across pattern b in the 1950s, and pattern c is very 1970s.
- c. "All that and a bag of chips" was a popular phrase in the '90s. It meant someone was impressive and cool.
- a. Portable CD players were often used to listen to music in the 1990s. Record players (b) became popular in the mid-1890s (and they've made a recent return!), and portable MP3 players (c) were widely used in the early 2000s. ★

A young boy with short blonde hair, wearing a striped shirt and blue pants with a white bow at the back, is painting a mural on a wall. He is holding a paintbrush and looking up at the wall. The mural is a lush green scene with various plants and flowers. The title "One Small Thing" is written in large, green, brush-stroke letters across the top of the mural.

One Small Thing

Can a smile change a life?

by Denise Lewis Patrick

A large, stylized green letter 'K' is positioned at the start of the first paragraph.

Kayla stepped back from the mural that covered three walls of the art room, dripping green paint onto her sneakers. She didn't mind. She still couldn't believe that her drawing was coming to life with the help of her classmates. The colorful island scene with banana trees and parrots and a bright yellow sun was the perfect stage backdrop for the school's midwinter fund-raiser.

Suddenly the loudspeaker on the wall crackled.

"Kayla Fisher to the office! Kayla Fisher, please report to the principal's office."

"What's that about?" her friend Joy whispered, looking surprised. Kayla pushed her glasses up on her nose.

"Don't know," Kayla answered. She'd never been called to the principal's office before.

Mr. Peters gently took the paintbrush out of her hand. "You'd better go find out," he said. "And take off your smock!" he called out.

Kayla was glad it was the middle of the class

period so the halls were empty as she rushed through the building. She took a deep breath at the door to the principal's office.

"Wait just a minute, Kayla," the secretary said. "And calm down. It's nothing serious."

Kayla felt only a tiny bit better. She shifted from one foot to the other and then sat on the edge of a chair.

"Kayla, you can go in now," the secretary said.

As Kayla entered the office, Principal Getty looked up from her computer screen. "Kayla, come in! I have a special job for you."

"For me?" Kayla tried to relax and not fiddle with her glasses.

"Yes. I hear it was your idea for our school to raise money to help rebuild houses for families all over the world."

"Um, yes." Kayla felt proud, but a bit embarrassed.

"Well, I've gotten calls this morning from two other middle schools that want to work with us—"



Kayla's eyes widened. "Really?"

"Yes, really," Ms. Getty said. "Homeworks is an organization that does a lot of good. Now, we need a catchy name and nice program for the event. Mr. Peters tells me you're a good artist, so I'm asking you if you can come up with something."

Kayla swallowed. Sure, it was her idea, but she always had ideas about doing things. She volunteered to clean up the town park and baked bread at the local soup kitchen. Her dad sometimes called her Make-the-World-Great Kayla.

"Yes, I can try," Kayla said.

"Good. Try for Monday," Ms. Getty said. "We'll need to get programs to the printer in about a week. Thank you!"

Kayla was dismissed. A program? Maybe she could use some of the art from the mural and add to it. Jazz it up. Done. A catchy name? Kayla sighed. She wasn't really a word person, but Joy was.

The bell rang, and Kayla hurried back to the art

room to get her things, hoping to spot Joy before math class to pick her brain.

On Saturday Kayla yanked out one of her earbuds as her favorite gel pen bounced off her bed and onto the floor. It rolled all the way across her bedroom. Ms. Getty's request had seemed so easy, but it was noon already and nothing Kayla had done so far felt right.

"Why does my life have to be so complicated?" she moaned. Kayla got up to fetch her pen and tried to avoid the crumpled paper balls sprinkled across the rug.

She hoped that with Joy she'd have better luck coming up with a catchy name. They were meeting later at the library to compare notes.

Kayla spotted the gel pen near her bedroom door and bent to pick it up at the same time that her little brother burst through the door. She jumped out of the way, banging her elbow.

"Ouch, Cam!" Kayla yelled. She could barely see Cameron's head peering over an armload of jackets and coats.

"Kay! Are you ready?"

"For what?" she asked, absentmindedly rubbing her aching arm.

"To go!" Cameron frowned at her. Kayla wasn't sure why he was annoyed when she was the one who'd been hurt.

"Listen, Cam. I'm really busy, OK?"

"But you promised!" He lost his grip and coats and jackets spilled into Kayla's room.

She noticed that Cam was wearing his blue team sweatshirt with "Storm Soccer" across the front. She thought of the one she had just like it, which was faded and balled up in the back of her closet. Suddenly she remembered.

"Oh, Cam, today's the team coat drive, isn't it?"

"Yes!"

Kayla avoided her brother's face and started to gather everything up. She'd completely forgotten that it had been her idea for past team members to help out.

"Cam," she said slowly, "what I'm doing is really important."

"What about people who need coats?" Cam asked. "It's winter. This is really important, too."

"I'm sorry, Cam," she started to say. But he only gave her a disappointed look and pushed past her, just as their mother appeared. She was wearing a Storm sweatshirt, too.

"Hey, what's going on here? We have to be at the gym in half an hour."

"Kay's not coming!" Cameron shouted from the kitchen.

Kayla took a deep breath. "Mom, I have to finish the program and I'm supposed to meet

Joy later and—"


"Kayla," her mother said calmly, "I understand how exciting it is to be involved with such a big project. But you know there are large and small ways to help people, don't you?"

"Yes . . ." Kayla said slowly, realizing that not only was her mother right, but Cam had been right, too.

Kayla texted Joy about the change in plans and followed her mother out into the December afternoon. Cam elbowed her and grinned when she eased into the backseat beside him and shut the car door.

"I knew you'd change your mind," he said.

With a shiver, Kayla realized that having a coat on a day like this was not a small thing at all.



ou have to ask for more time, that's all," Joy was saying as she and Kayla walked into the cafeteria on Monday.

"What if I can't do it?" Kayla sighed as the lunch lady plopped dry-looking nuggets and broccoli on her tray. She pushed her glasses up on her nose with one hand.

"Sure, you can!" Joy said. "Oh, look! There's only one chocolate milk left. I'm gonna grab it!"

Kayla headed toward the table near the salad bar where she and Joy sat because it had the best view of all the action. A dark-haired girl she'd never seen before was already sitting there.

For the first time in days, Kayla's brain switched gears. She noticed that, despite all the loud voices and clattering noises surrounding them, the girl never looked up from her plate. She was chewing very slowly, as if she wasn't sure that she liked what she was eating. Kayla glanced at

her own unappetizing tray.

"It's not very good, is it?" she said with a smile.

The girl looked up in surprise and shook her head. Her long black hair moved like curtains hiding her face. Kayla sat down.

"It's better to bring lunch on broccoli day, but I forgot!"

"You can bring lunch here?" The girl spoke each word carefully, as if she wasn't very comfortable speaking in English.

Kayla smiled again. "Sure," she said, quickly adding: "Oh, I'm Kayla."

"I am Graciél."

"Is this your first day at Middleton?"

"Yes. I . . . I like your hair," Graciél said, looking at Kayla's braids and looping her own hair around her ears. She seemed more relaxed.

"Thanks," Kayla said. "My brother used to pull it when he was little. It was so annoying!"

"I don't have brothers or sisters," Graciél said. "You have a big family?"

"Just my brother and my parents. Did you just move to town?"

Graciél nodded but didn't offer any details. She seemed shy, so Kayla kept talking.

"You'll like our school," she said. "We have a big program coming up—it's a fund-raiser for this group called Homeworks—"

"Homeworks?" Graciél looked puzzled.

"No, Homeworks . . . because they do work building homes for people."

"Ah!"

"Yes, and there's going to be an art show, a music concert, dance performances . . ."

Graciél's face lit up. "Art? Like painting?"

Kayla knew right away by the way she reacted that she was an artist, too.



"Are you taking art with Mr. Peters? My best friend, Joy, and I are in his class. He runs the art club, too. He's great!"

"Yes, I—" Graciél suddenly stopped talking. Her eyes were fixed on something behind Kayla. Kayla turned around. Joy was coming, along with Brian, a boy from art class. Brian waved.

"Kayla!" Joy was breathless. "The fund-raiser's sold so many tickets that it's moving to the high school auditorium!"

"Yeah," Brian nodded. "Mr. Peters wants to see us after school. He says we need a bigger mural, more hands for setup, more everything!"

"OMG! How're we going to do all that?" Kayla was excited, but a little anxious.

"Dunno," Brian shrugged. "Maybe we can recruit some kids from the other schools to help out. Anyway, see you later." He spun around to sink a jump shot into the recycling can with his

napkin, and failed.

"Other schools? This is our show," Joy pointed out. She looked curiously at Graciel.

"Joy, this is Graciel," Kayla said. Then she turned to Graciel.

"How would you like to join the art club?" Kayla asked.

Graciel pressed her lips together for a few seconds, then nodded.

"But I must ask my parents," she said.

Graciel didn't make the first after-school meeting, but the next day she met Kayla and Joy at the art room door. Kayla introduced her to Mr. Peters and the art gang.

"OK," Mr. Peters said. "What ideas do we have for a bigger mural?"

"We could add more beach," Brian suggested. Kayla shook her head. "That doesn't feel right." "What about sand castles?" somebody said. Graciel looked quickly at Kayla and then raised

her hand. "May I have an idea?"

"Yes, Graciel," Mr. Peters said.

She pulled a worn-looking folder from her book bag and opened it. Kayla could see colors . . . they were paintings! She and the other kids crowded around the table.

Graciel spread out beautiful watercolors. There were birds and tropical flowers and a market scene with fruits so real-looking that Kayla gasped.

"These are wonderful," Mr. Peters said.

Graciel blushed. "I think, because it is raising money to build houses, maybe we have a house like this for people to see?"

She slipped one painting from the back of the folder. It showed a small house with pink walls, a blue door, and a red tiled roof.

"Is this your house, Graciel?" Kayla whispered.

"It was my home," Graciel answered quietly.

"A house is a home, too, yes?"

"Yes!" Kayla suddenly thumped on the table so hard that paintbrushes and papers began to fly in all directions. "Oh! That's it, Graciel! That's it!"

"Kayla . . ." Mr. Peters shot out both hands to



steady the table. Graciél looked alarmed.

"I'm sorry. It's just that Graciél came up with the perfect name for our fund-raiser: A House Is a Home, Too."

A murmur of agreement spread through the art room.

"I think Kayla's right, Graciél," Mr. Peters said. "Now, let's get some fresh paper up, and we can get started on our sketch!"

Everyone was suddenly full of questions for Graciél: Where was her home? Was this her first trip to the United States? Where did she learn to speak English? What was her favorite thing about Middleton?

Graciél answered, sometimes laughing, sometimes explaining patiently.

"A small town in South America. Yes. At school. Pizza!"

"You're a great artist," Joy told Graciél as the girls left the art club meeting.

"All of you are, too," Graciél said, pulling up the collar on her coat. Joy spotted her dad and gave them a quick good-bye before she raced away.

Kayla heard a horn honk twice—her mom's signal. "Hey, do you have a ride home?" she asked.

Graciél shook her head. "My parents are both working. I will walk."

"Come with me," Kayla said, pulling Graciél toward the car.

"Mom, this is Graciél. Can we give her a ride home?"

Kayla's mom glanced over her shoulder. "Hello, Graciél. Where do you live?"

Graciél dug into her pocket and pulled out a slip of paper. "Sixty-four Howell Street," she read.

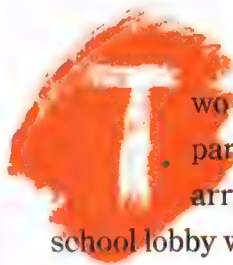
"That's near the new bakery, isn't it?" Kayla's mom asked as she smoothly pulled into traffic.

Graciél's face lit up. "It is my family's bakery!" she said proudly.

When they arrived at the bakery, Graciél asked them to wait. She ran inside and returned in a minute with a small bag, which she pushed into Kayla's hand. The pastries inside were still warm.

"We thank you!" Graciél said, smiling. "See you tomorrow!"

Kayla knew she'd made a new friend.



Two days before the show, art club kids, parents, and a few teachers were busy arranging the art display in the high school lobby while the middle school orchestra rehearsed in the auditorium.

"Hey, where's Graciél?" Joy asked, holding a rooster drawing while Kayla taped it to the wall.

"I don't know," Kayla answered. She stepped back to check their work. "She should be here already. And that's crooked!"

Kayla felt a little like she was in a museum—one school had made clay bowls and vases; another had made wall hangings out of knotted string, called macramé. She wished she had time to really look at everything.

"Come on, Kayla. We can fit one more here—"

Before Kayla could answer, the lobby doors banged open. Graciél flew in along with a burst of cold air. Kayla knew something was very wrong.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

Graciél was crying and talking very fast in Spanish. Kayla's mother and Mr. Peters rushed down the hall. Mr. Peters spoke to Graciél in Spanish.

Graciél took a deep breath. "We have trouble at the bakery!" she said in English. But then she

started speaking Spanish again. Kayla could only understand the words “water” and “bad.”

Mr. Peters translated for them. “The water pipes at her parents’ bakery froze and burst.”

“Oh, no!” Kayla’s mother said.

“I cannot stay,” Graciel told Kayla. “I’m sorry. I must help my parents.”

“I’ll take you home,” Kayla’s mother said.

Kayla felt awful. She knew how important the bakery was to Graciel’s family—they had just come to this country to start a new life. She gave Graciel a hug, because she didn’t know what else to do, or to say.

Joy asked Mr. Peters, “Like, what happens when water pipes explode? Is it really bad?”

Mr. Peters nodded. “It can be. The store may be flooded.”

“Our basement flooded once,” Brian said. “Everything down there got soaked. Lots of stuff was ruined!”

“I know this is difficult news,” Mr. Peters said. “But we really have to focus. We have to finish the

art display.”

Walking slowly back to her spot, Kayla looked into the open doors of the auditorium. The sight of the brightly painted house and sunny skies behind the kids on the stage made her stop.

Joy bumped right into her. “What?” she asked when she caught a glimpse of Kayla’s face.

“I know how we can help Graciel,” Kayla said mysteriously.

“How?”

“I’ll tell you later,” Kayla said. “First, I need to talk to Principal Getty.”

The night of the fund-raiser arrived and Kayla’s heart was pounding. She had never seen so many people in one place before. She was standing with Principal Getty and the president of Homeworks near the steps leading up to the stage. The orchestra was already warming up. Everyone seemed excited. Kayla looked anxiously across the audience for Graciel.

“Don’t worry, she’ll be here,” Principal Getty said. “I spoke to her parents.” She patted Kayla’s shoulder. “And I didn’t give your secret away.”

Kayla had just met Graciel’s parents the day before. She, her mom, dad, and Cam had gone to the bakery to check on Graciel and her family. They used mops and buckets to help get rid of the water. But just like Brian had said, the water had damaged the ceiling and floors and ruined one of the refrigerators. Boxes of supplies and baking ingredients would have to be replaced, and the bakery had to be closed while everything was repaired.

“Look,” Principal Getty said.

Kayla finally saw Graciel in the aisle, followed



closely by her parents. Graciél wore her hair in two long braids, and Kayla remembered the first day they had met. Now it seemed as if she'd known Graciél forever.

The lights dimmed, signaling quiet. Principal Getty and Kayla stepped up to a microphone onstage. Kayla saw Joy giving her a thumbs-up—because she could never keep a secret from Joy.

"Welcome, everyone!" Principal Getty said in a loud, proud voice. "Tonight, we've come together to enjoy art of all kinds. More importantly, we have come together to help families across the world. Byron Lee, the president of Homeworks, has something to say."

Principal Getty motioned for Graciél and her parents to come up to the stage, while the crowd applauded.

"What is this?" Graciél asked Kayla. But Mr. Lee answered before Kayla could.

"To thank you, the Middleton community, for breaking a fund-raising record, Homeworks is doing a rebuilding project right here, at the Starlight Bakery!"

A roar went up from the art club. Graciél's father looked stunned, and her mother burst into tears. Graciél squeezed Kayla's hand without letting go.

"Thank you for doing this big thing for us!" she said.

"I—I just wanted to help," Kayla said. Graciél's parents hugged Kayla and thanked her over and over in Spanish. Finally, Kayla and Graciél were able to take their places with their classmates.

When they settled into their seats, Graciél whispered in Kayla's ear. "You know, you already gave me one small but very special thing."

Kayla was totally confused. "What do you

mean? When?"

"The first day we met. You gave me a smile," Graciél said.

The music began. Kayla felt calm and wonderful inside. She glanced over at her friends, old and new. At that moment, she truly understood how giving—and receiving—a warm smile could be an incredibly big thing. ★



Meet the Author

Denise Lewis Patrick



Age 10

Now

I write children's books, and I also teach writing at a local college. But when I'm not teaching or writing, I like to make cloth dolls, draw, or relax by reading the great work of other authors.

THIS OR THAT

Now or '90s edition!
Would you rather . . .

NOW

'90s



wear mismatched
earrings

OR

stick-on earrings?

download songs to create
a custom playlist

OR

make a "mix tape" by
recording songs from the
radio?

craft a pretty
pendant
necklace

OR

a seashell choker?

spin a
fidget spinner

OR

trade slap bracelets
with friends?

carry your stuff in an
animal-themed bag

OR

a cute mini backpack?

run a 5K for charity

OR

go in-line skating?

sip a colorful smoothie

OR

clear root beer?

send your friends digital
messages

OR

exchange fun handwritten
notes?

wear athletic tights and
layered tees

OR

a short, baggy dress with
combat boots?

have red ketchup
with your fries

OR

ketchup that's purple,
green, or blue?

decorate your room
with framed quotes

OR

posters of your
favorite boy band?

code your own video
game

OR

create your own obstacle
course?

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

I WAS BORN ON
JANUARY 20, 1893.

I GREW UP IN WAXAHACHIE,
TEXAS. IT WAS A SMALL TOWN WHERE
BLACK PEOPLE WERE NOT ALLOWED TO
LIVE IN THE SAME NEIGHBORHOODS
OR ATTEND THE SAME SCHOOLS
AS WHITE PEOPLE.

I HAD 12 BROTHERS AND
SISTERS! BY THE TIME I WAS
BORN, SOME OF THEM HAD
ALREADY GROWN UP AND
MOVED AWAY.

MY PARENTS WERE
SHARECROPPERS, WHICH MEANT
THEY RENTED FARMLAND AND PAID
THE LANDOWNER WITH SOME OF
OUR COTTON CROP. IT WAS A VERY
DIFFICULT LIFE, AND I DREAMED
OF DOING SOMETHING
DIFFERENT.

MATH WAS ALWAYS EASY
FOR ME. I WAS SO GOOD AT IT THAT
MY MOTHER PUT ME IN CHARGE
OF MY FAMILY'S BOOKKEEPING
WHEN I WAS STILL YOUNG.

THE VERY FIRST AIRPLANE
TOOK FLIGHT WHEN I WAS 10 YEARS
OLD. IT HAPPENED ACROSS THE
COUNTRY FROM WHERE I LIVED,
BUT IT WOULD CHANGE MY
LIFE FOREVER.

EACH NIGHT BEFORE BED, MY
MOTHER MADE US PRACTICE READING
OUT LOUD. I DIDN'T MIND. I LOVED TO
READ! I ALWAYS LOOKED FORWARD TO
VISITING THE TRAVELING LIBRARY
THAT CAME TO TOWN A FEW
TIMES A YEAR.



SHE'S... BESSIE COLEMAN AVIATOR

When Bessie Coleman was a child, soaring in the skies was still just a dream for everyone. But when Bessie moved to Chicago as a young woman, her brothers told her exciting stories about the planes and pilots they saw in Europe during World War I. The airplane was a new and very dangerous invention, but Bessie had an adventurous spirit. She decided to become a pilot. At that time, however, U.S. aviation schools did not accept women or people of color. Even though Bessie applied to many schools, none of them would give her a chance.

Instead of giving up her dream, Bessie found another way. After earning money as a manicurist and teaching herself French, she was accepted to a famous flight school in France. In 1921, she became the first African American woman and first Native American woman (Bessie's father was Cherokee) to earn her pilot's license—two years before famous aviator Amelia Earhart.

Back home in the United States, Bessie became a daring stunt pilot and celebrity who dazzled crowds at air shows across the country, earning the nickname “Queen Bess.” She flew her plane in figure eights, sent it into spins, and dove toward the ground, pulling up just in time. She also parachuted out of planes and walked on their wings while they flew high in the air!

Bessie enjoyed the thrill of performing, but her bigger goal was to teach the next generation of pilots. When she wasn't performing, Bessie traveled to churches, schools, and theaters to teach people about flying. Sadly, Bessie died in a plane accident in 1926 before she was able to achieve her greatest dream: opening an aviation school for African Americans. Three years after her death, fellow aviator William J. Powell opened a flight school in Los Angeles and named it in Bessie's honor. Since then, Bessie Coleman has inspired generations of people to dream about what's possible and to take to the skies! ★

BESSIE COLEMAN HAS INSPIRED
GENERATIONS OF PEOPLE TO DREAM
ABOUT WHAT'S POSSIBLE AND
TO TAKE TO THE SKIES!



✂️ Posters: Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters. ★

RAISE THE WOOF



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A LITTLE HEART CAN CHANGE THE WORLD



★ American Girl

How do I stop sleepover drama?



Dear American Girl,

Whenever I go to a slumber party, there's a lot of drama and someone ends up getting her feelings hurt and going home. What can I do?

stuck in the middle

You could be the girl to change this unhappy pattern. If it's mostly the same group each time, tell them before the next party that you're taking a pledge not to participate in drama and that you want to have fun. It's a party, after all! At the first whiff of drama, keep calm, remind everyone you're all friends, and try to change the subject. If someone's feelings are getting hurt, you can ask her if she's OK and be a caring listener without getting "stuck in the middle" of an issue. You'll dial down the drama by being a friend to everyone.

Dear American Girl,

There's this girl at school who lies to my friends and me. We know she's lying but don't know what to say or how to deal with it.

Help!!

What sort of lies does she tell? Does she want to make her life sound interesting in the hope that you and your friends will like her? Or is she trying to escape blame for something she did or, worse, actively stirring up trouble for others? If she's just trying to make friends, you might tell her as gently as you can that it seems she's not always honest—and that it's hard to be friends when people aren't their true selves. If her fibs are actually causing problems for others, you'll need to let your teacher or school counselor know what you suspect.

Dear American Girl,

A person in my family smokes. I've learned the dangers of smoking, and it's really bad. Ever since I found out this family member is smoking, I've felt worried and nervous and upset.

Annie

You can't make someone quit smoking, but you can help. Start by telling this person (your aunt, for example) that you'd like her to stop because you love her, you know how much it can hurt her, and you want her in your life for a long time. If she wants to quit, encourage her to get support from her doctor and smoking cessation groups, because quitting on one's own is especially hard. Also, let her know as often as you can how glad you are that she is trying. If this family member is not an adult (your brother, for example), share your concerns with him now and get more info. If you're still worried after you talk, you'll need to tell your parents. Remember, it's not tattling if someone is in danger.

Dear American Girl,

I'm really tall. The first thing people say when they meet me is, "You must play basketball." That makes me so annoyed! I like other things like painting, soccer, and singing. How do I tell people their assumptions make me uncomfortable?

HELP!

You can be honest and say, "A lot of people assume I like basketball because I'm tall. But what I actually like is painting and singing, and my favorite sport is soccer." By being open and direct, you can help them realize that it's wrong to make assumptions and comments based on someone's body.



Dear American Girl,

I have a close friend who I spend a lot of time with. She is really nice, but I want to branch out with my friendships. People assume we do everything together. I don't want to be identified as only being close friends with her.

branch out

It's normal (and healthy) to want to enlarge your circle of friends. Try weaving in other girls as opportunities present themselves. Are you involved in activities that your friend is not? Are you in separate classrooms, or do you live in different neighborhoods? Look for or create situations or interests where separate friendships would be natural. You don't need to make an announcement, but if your friend is concerned, reassure her and affirm your allegiance. Who knows? Maybe she would like to branch out, too!



Advice from You

Dear American Girl,

I have a brother, and he is SUPER mean. He thinks he's being funny, but it's not funny to me. I try to ignore him, but it's really hard. Please help!

oh Brother

Try to ignore him. If you act like it doesn't bother you, he'll probably stop.

-Brenna

Give him a pep talk. Show him that he can be better. If that doesn't work, ask your parents to have a family meeting every week or so and talk about your feelings.

-Angle

With my brother, I try very hard to just laugh it off. It helps!

-Meredith

Use your words. Say, "Please stop. To you it may be funny, but to me it's mean." Maybe he doesn't know he's being mean.

-Sierra

Pretend not to know what he's talking about, or just change the subject to something he really likes.

-Stephanie

Do fun stuff with your friends or parents. Then it will be easier to ignore him. I have a brother, too, and this works.

-Kayla

Ask him nicely to stop. Being kind to him will help him be kind to you. If he doesn't stop, tell your parents or an older sibling.

-Abbie

Stay calm. He just wants a reaction from you. Also, keep in mind that teasing is sometimes a way of showing that he loves you. It makes no sense, but it is what it is.

-J.H.

My brothers get on my nerves, but I just say "Love you, too."

-Sofia

Advice from You

I love my mom, but sometimes she tells other people embarrassing things about me! I've asked her to stop, and she says she's sorry, but then she does it again!

info

Do you have advice to help solve this problem?

Or do you need advice for solving your own problem?

Send letters to:

Help!
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

We can't respond to all letters. But we read everything you send!

BEHIND THE Scenes

When the first magazine issue was published in 1993, here is what the current magazine staff looked like!



Jolene's favorite cover is from 2007. She loves the model's sweater.



This 2003 issue was the first one Andrea worked on as an intern!



Darcie loves this 1997 cover because it's the year her daughter was born.



It's no surprise Melissa chose this 2008 cover. She loves dogs!



Chrissy's favorite cover is from 2012. She loves the fun bubbles!

Riley's favorite cover is from 2016. He loved this outdoor photo shoot!



Gretchen's favorite cover is from 2017. She loved planning the set for the photo shoot.



Dan loved this cover, too. Shooting at a real Christmas tree farm was a blast!



Barbara likes this cover because she loved getting to know these two best friends.



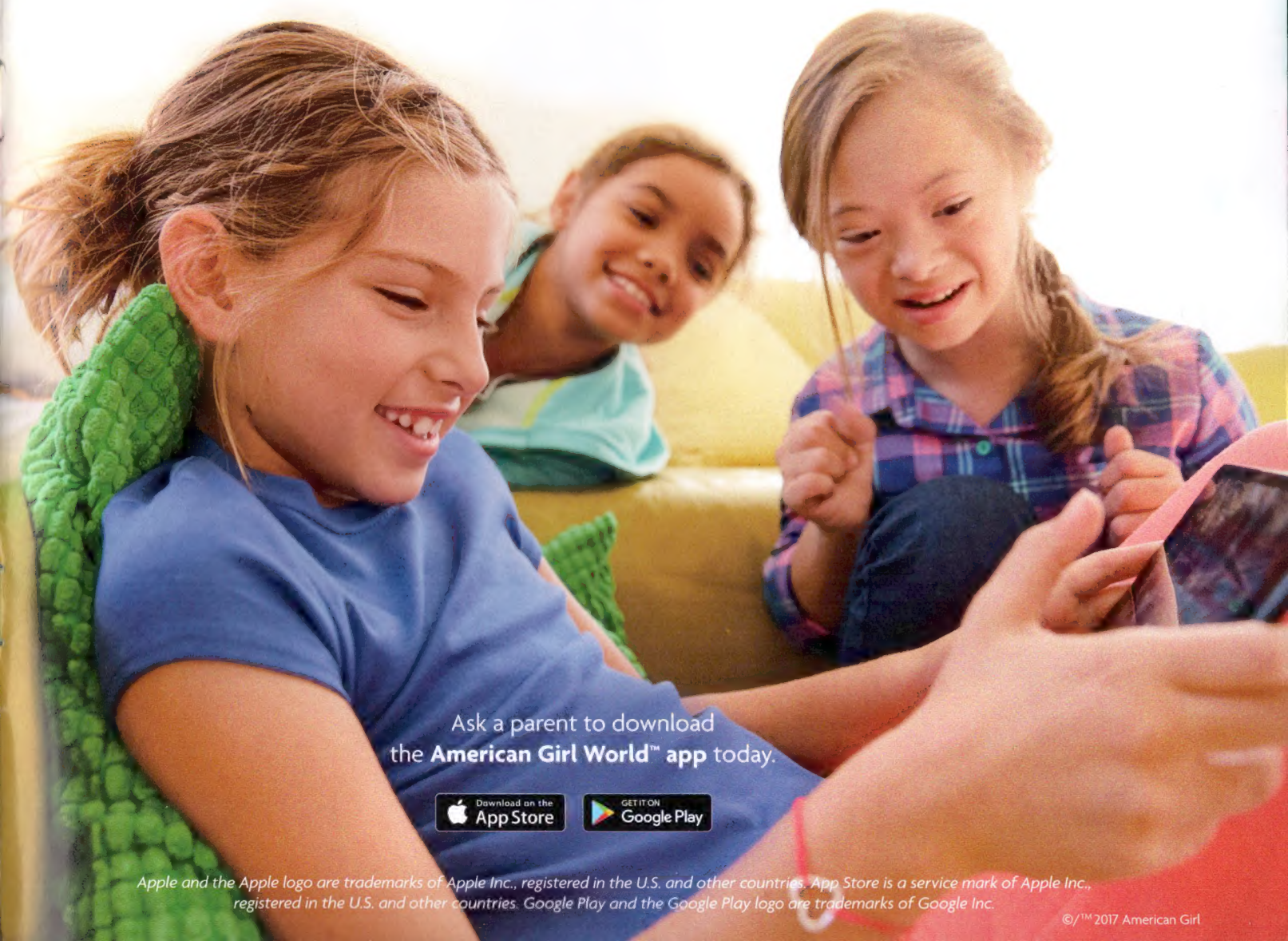
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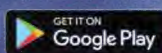
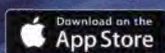


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American Girl

Coming up in the next issue of
American Girl magazine!

Leader of the Pack

Learn how to be
the best dog sitter
on the block.

What a Pair

Our pet look-alike
contest winners
are a hoot!

Critter Calm

Breathe, balance,
and MOOOve with
animal-inspired
yoga.

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and fabulous.